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I am not the bad guy, says Vikram Budhi

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MUMBAI: Vikram Budhi, the Indian student in detention since April 14 in Indiana for allegedly threatening to kill US President George Bush, his wife, the vice-president and other VVIPs, has categorically denied the charges against him.

Recently his family, which lives in Navi Mumbai, received a letter from him in which he has given a detailed account of what exactly happened.

He said on April 14 at 9 am three men from the US **secret service**-Doug Lehman, Lawrence Brown and Wayne Gault-came to his residence in West Lafayette, Indiana, with arrest and search warrants. After arresting him, they took him away and then searched his premises and took his computers, floppies etc.

Budhi said the search was illegal since it was not conducted in his presence as required by federal laws. He alleged that the **secret service** agents "planted some items"and gave the inventory list to him at 10.30 am and it was signed only by the three. This clearly showed that there were no independent witnesses to the search which rendered it illegal.

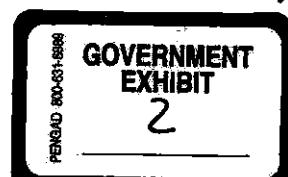
Budhi, lodged in the Hammond police station lock-up, said the magistrate, Andrew Rodovich, appointed a lawyer, John Martin, to defend him.

When his application for bond (bail) came up for hearing, the magistrate asked the prosecution if he was a "danger to the community". "The prosecution could not show that I am a danger to the community, but said I am a 'flight risk','Budhi said. Flight risk means that there was a possibility of his jumping bail.

"I am shocked at the turn of events, but I am taking it strongly,"Budhi, who did his masters in mathematics from Purdue university in 2001 and is currently working on his Phd in industrial engineering, stated.

"I am not the bad guy they have made out to be. I emphatically state that I wish no harm to the President of the United States, the vice-president, their family members or Donald Rumsfeld or any government member,"he said.

Budhi said the websites, on which the alleged threats were posted and which were cited by the



prosecution as their exhibits, were not made by him. "These writings do not reflect my views in any way," he said.

Budhi's father, Capt B K Subbarao, a scientist-cum-lawyer, left for the US to help him secure bail. Before leaving the city he told TOI: "I have done extensive research and it is clear to me that someone has hacked into Budhi's computer.

It is not only his computer which has been hacked, but that of several other students. I do not know why only Budhi is being targeted.

This is the third time that computers on such a large scale has been hacked there. After the two earlier incidents, the university had warned the students to be on the guard. My son is being framed for reasons best known to the US government."